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Tell Hughes' power play in election

LOS ANGELES [AP] — The forher head of billionaire Howard Hughes' Nevada empire said yesterday that Hughes made cash contributions to President Nixon and political rivals out of a "desire to elect and choose the next President of the United States."

The late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy and Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey were the rivals mentioned.

Robert Maheu, who was fired by Hughes in 1970, said the billionaire recluse had assured him that $175,000 in contributions, made between 1968 and 1970, would not violate federal laws.

In a deposition given to Hughes' attorneys as part of a libel suit against the billionaire, Maheu said all of the contributions came from personal funds of Hughes and not from his corporate holdings.

It is illegal for a corporation to make political contributions.

MAHEU ALSO referred to "a handwritten memorandum from Hughes indicating his desire to elect and choose the next President of the United States, as well as his successor."